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**MEDIA RELEASE**

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**DEADLINE NEARS FOR BOOSTED SCHOLARSHIPS**

NASHVILLE, Tenn., July 11, 2007 — Lawmakers recently agreed to boost awards for the state's growing lottery scholarship program but the window of opportunity is closing as the application deadline is less than two months away.

"Students really need to jump on this as soon as possible," said Tim Phelps, associate executive director for grants and scholarships at Tennessee Student Assistance Corp., the state agency that administers the lottery scholarship and other aid programs. "I say to any student who is planning on going to any post-secondary institution this fall, including a technology center or community college, if you have not yet applied for financial aid, you need to get moving."

Education can have a profound impact on employment status and earnings. Individuals with a bachelor's degree earn on average \$20,000 more a year and have a substantially lower unemployment rate than those with a high school diploma only, according to the latest numbers from the U.S. Bureau of the Census and Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Now entering its fourth year, the lottery scholarship program awarded \$188.3 million to 60,000 students last year. This fall, students eligible for the program who are enrolled in Tennessee four-year colleges and universities can expect to see a \$200 increase in their annual awards for a total of \$4,000 and those enrolled in two-year colleges can expect an increase of \$100 for a total of \$2,000. In addition, students awarded the Wilder-Naifeh Technical Skills Grant will see their annual award amount increase by \$500 for a total of \$2,000.

Potentially eligible students who have not yet applied for the program have until Sept. 1, 2007 to process their applications in order to still receive funds for the for the 2007 fall semester. To apply, they have to fill out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid, better known as the FAFSA, available at [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov). Submitting the FAFSA also begins the application process for federal Pell grants and other student aid.

For more information about eligibility for student financial assistance programs, including lottery scholarships, please visit [www.CollegePaysTN.com](http://www.CollegePaysTN.com).

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